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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**LAST INDIVIDUAL SENTENCED IN
PERF FRAUD SCHEME**

PRESS RELEASE

Christina McKee, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that DEBRA D. TURNER, 48, of Indianapolis was sentenced late yesterday by U.S. District Judge Sarah E. Barker following her guilty plea for her role in a fraud scheme to steal more than \$226,000 in funds from the Public Employees Retirement Fund of Indiana (PERF). The charges are the result of a joint investigation by the Indiana State Police, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, and the U.S. Secret Service.

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The Indictment charged that JAMES A. SPAULDING, worked with six other persons, CARSON L. BRYANT, CHARLES L. BURNEY, WALTER L. HOLLOWAY, AARON L. PRICE, LADONNA J. JACKSON and TURNER, to steal \$226,773.63 from PERF.

SPAULDING worked as a temporary employee at PERF from January 28, 2002 through July 3, 2002 on a special project known as the "Minimum Distribution Project." This Project was designed to locate living and deceased PERF members who were at least 70 ½ years of age, and who had not yet received distributions. The goal of the project was to distribute retirement funds to members still living or to locate and distribute funds to the beneficiaries or survivors of the deceased members.

As part of his duties at PERF, SPAULDING had access to the personal identifying information contained in computer records and documents maintained by PERF. He also had the ability to make changes to these records and cause PERF to issue checks drawn on the retirement accounts of its members. These checks were drawn on an account PERF maintained.

As part of the bank fraud scheme, SPAULDING made false and fraudulent changes to the information contained in the PERF computer system to cause benefit checks to be issued to BRYANT, BURNEY, HOLLOWAY, PRICE, JACKSON, TURNER, and BURNEY's half-brother, Correy Harrison, who was not involved in the scheme. SPAULDING knew the other defendants through various social connections, and he changed PERF records to show that his co-defendants were the beneficiaries of seven deceased PERF members. BRYANT,

BURNEY, HOLLOWAY, PRICE, JACKSON, and TURNER then cashed the fraudulently issued benefit checks, which incorrectly stated that these persons were the beneficiaries of seven deceased PERF members. BURNEY a/k/a Correy Harrison is also charged with allegedly misusing the social security number of his half-brother, Correy Harrison, in connection with the bank fraud scheme and making false statements about his identity on a Currency Transaction Report he caused to be prepared in connection with his withdrawal of over \$22,000 in U.S. Currency from an account in Harrison's name.

Turner pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud and one count of prohibited financial transactions and was sentenced to four months of imprisonment to be followed by four months home confinement and 4 years of supervised release. Judge Barker also ordered him to pay restitution in the amount of \$24,057.30.

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